trees about 30 feet high. On these trees were placed the nests in numbers; on one I counted eighteen, and in all I think there must have been some fifty nests. At this time of the year, the beginning of May, only a few birds remained, and I only found two eggs, upon which the female was still sitting, but dead and dry as an Egyptian mummy.

The Darters were not the only inhabitants of this secluded spot, for hundreds of Fruit-Bats were dangling at the ends of the hippa palms, passing away their day in chattering and screaming, no doubt discussing their last night's raid on some poor native's garden. These Bats seem to court the full glare of the sun, keeping up a gentle fluttering motion with one wing, as though fanning themselves. Every now and then some dozens would fly off as we approached (making a loud rattling noise with their wings), seeking out a new resting-place, when the screaming and chattering would be increased, as their companions did not wish to be disturbed. I noticed as they flew between us and the midday sun that they kept their mouths open, as if panting for breath.

To return to the Darters, about the middle of November I sent a native to see if they were nesting. He returned with some twenty eggs and two nests. The eggs are like those of a Cormorant, only much smaller; becoming stained during incubation, after the manner of the Grebe's. The colour of the fresh egg is almost white, but becomes gradually brown during incubation, four and five being found in a nest. Young birds were also about; so this species is not very strict in its nesting-season. The nests were composed of small sticks, making a firm structure, lined with leaves.

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## XLII.—*On the Habits and Range of Bulwer's Pheasant.*

By W. H. Treacher.

In compliance with the request of one of the Editors for some notes on Bulwer's Pheasant (*Lobiophasis bulweri*), I can now give the readers of 'The Ibis' the following information. I was in Labuan when the first specimen was brought in from the coast of Borneo, just opposite that British Colony, in December 1874. It was taken to Mr. (now Sir Hugh) Low, who was known to the natives far and wide as a collector of birds, beasts, butterflies, and fishes. As Sir Henry Bulwer (then Governer of Labuan, and now High Commissioner of Cyprus) was just leaving for England, Mr. Low gave him the skin, which he took home and presented to the British Museum, where it was named after him, by Mr. Sharpe, *Lobiophasis bulweri*. This specimen came from the Upper Lawas, a small river in the Sultanate of Brunei, on the west coast of Borneo, which has become somewhat famous for its wealth in birds and orchids.

It is strange that though Mr. Low had collectors hunting for him, probably ever since the foundation of the Colony of Labuan in 1848, no Bulwer's Pheasant was ever brought in till the end of 1874.

The late Mr. H. T. Ussher succeeded Sir Henry Bulwer as Governor, and after I had been up the Lawas, and made special communications with the Kadayan and Murut natives, we had no trouble in procuring skins, though we found it difficult to keep the birds alive, and I do not think any living specimen has yet reached home. Most of my skins are included in the collection of Borneo birds which I presented to the Oxford University Museum, which was catalogued by Mr. Sharpe (P. Z. S. 1877, p. 93).

Soon afterwards, I think, we heard that the bird had been discovered in Dutch Borneo. The native name of this pheasant is 'Karampagi,' given to it from the curious shape of the white tail, which resembles that of a knife used by the natives for cutting the ears of *padi* (rice). The only other district in Northern Borneo where I have heard of the Bulwer's Pheasant being common is that of the Kimabatangan river, which flows out on the east coast of British North Borneo. Mr. G. Hewett, who was for some time the representative of the British North Borneo Government in that district, and resided at Penungah, some 170–200 miles up the river, has kindly favoured me with the following notes:—

"I am afraid I cannot tell you very much about the Bulwer

Pheasant. I used to trap a good many up in Penungah, but I never saw one except those I caught. They were very plentiful, but they lie very close and seldom or never fly. I obtained them on steep hill-sides, and have never found one on any low-lying or flat ground. They are very pugnacious, and their heads are consequently often raw and scarred, while they would attack any other birds put in their cages. I do not know what they live on, but they thrive well in captivity on *padi*, boiled rice, and fruit. They roost in trees, and climb to their roost instead of flying. The hen bird has no resemblance to the cock, being more like the female of our common European Pheasant, though larger; it was consequently supposed to be a distinct species, and was described as such by Mr. Sharpe under the name of *Lobiophasis castanei-caudatus*. I never could keep any of the hens alive, as they refused food and seemed to mope, and would die in about two days. I am sorry I cannot give you any better information about them, but I could only gather such facts as I was able to observe myself."

The Dyaks say when a Bulwer's Pheasant flies a flood is coming.

## XLIII.—*An Attempt to Diagnose the Suborders of the Great Gallino-Gralline Group of Birds by the aid of Osteological Characters alone.* By Henry Seebohm.

Many opinions have been expressed, in 'The Ibis' and elsewhere, as to the new system which must replace the now discarded Cuvierian classification of birds; and occasionally, as in Professor Huxley's celebrated paper on the taxonomic value of the modifications of certain of the cranial bones, the reasons upon which the opinions were based have been given.

I propose in the present paper to record certain facts in the osteology of the Charadriidæ and their nearest allies, which facts possess at least this value—a knowledge of them enables the student to diagnose the various suborders. These